

per

MINUTES OF DEBATES, &c.

MINUTES OF DEBATES

IN COUNCIL

ON THE BANKS OF THE OTTAWA RIVER,

(COMMONLY CALLED THE MIAMIA OF THE LAKE)

NOVEMBER ———, 1791.

*Said to be held there by the CHIEFS of the several INDIAN
NATIONS, who defeated the ARMY of the UNITED
STATES, on the 4th of that Month.*

PRESENT,

VARIOUS NATIONS.

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M. DCC. XCII.



INTRODUCTION,

TO THE READER.

IT is thought that the following paragraph, taken from Bache's General Advertiser of March 3d, may not be an improper Introduction to these sheets—Some may doubt the authenticity of the council, at which these minutes are said to be taken; but the editor declares the minutes to be the real sentiments and declarations of the different nations.

“ A correspondent begs leave to observe, that the secretary at war, has indeed, with great ingenuity, vindicated a cause in which many passions are interested; yet there are many respectable characters, that from their situation, must be equally well informed, who positively and openly assert, *That in all contentions between the native Indians and the white settlers, nineteen times out of twenty, the latter were the aggressors.*

“ Over this people we truly possess many advantages; *they* have no secretary at war—no printing press—no manifestoes to enumerate unparalleled sufferings, and injuries they receive—while the offences of a few irritated individuals of their party are engraved on tables of brass—the countless wrongs poured upon that enduring race, are scarcely impressed even upon a bed of sand.

“ Let the still, small voice of conscience, or the unerring dictates of reason, declare which is most apparent to truth—that a people who exist by hunting, who abhor luxury, who possess an extent of territory bestowed upon them by the God of nature, and adequate to all their limited desires, whether they would leave those possessions in pursuit of plunder, or for an increase of soil that they do not want? Or if on the other side, they who are forming contracts for millions of acres, and who, in the amplitude of excess, still grasp for more, may not rather be *suspected* of an intention to accept of any pretence to desolate and destroy *those*, who at present impede their lawless ambition.”



Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Our wise men, whose business it is to remember, and to repeat to us, what happened before our day, and whilst we were yet children, tell us that the first white people, who came over the great salt water, were of different nations. That one party came to the south side of this great island; and nothing would satisfy these, but silver and gold; to acquire which, they massacred whole nations; and made Dogs of those whose lives they spared!

Another party landed on the sea coast of Carolina; where, presuming on their fire arms, they abused the women, and forced from them, the provisions which had been laid up for them and their children, by their absent husbands and fathers: these happened to be warriors; who, instantly on their return home, made a feast for the alligators, of all their white enemy; for they destroyed them at one blow, and cast them into the sea. The next landed in Virginia: these were an artful people; and soon became so numerous as to justify every evil, because they had the means to commit it with impunity! Witness the total extinction of the numerous nations and tribes, who inhabited the country watered by the Chesapeake and its rivers! About the same time other white men arrived, among our eastern relations, who are in like manner swept off the face of the earth; and whose very names are now lost to us! Our relations, the Irroquois, then saw the Dutch arrive in their rivers: these people, it is true, behaved well, and injured no body; and those who succeeded them followed their example for some time; but at length they became *strong, proud, insolent, and greedy after lands.*

Our relations, the Lenoppi, then saw the Swedes and Quakers arrive in *their* river: these were kind and friendly people, who sought every occasion to do our relations service, and they all lived happily together: the Quaker leader indeed became very greedy after lands; and our relations, not foreseeing the evil consequences, parted with them freely; *for you know that we red men cannot resist fair words and kind treatment.* But in process of time, other people of different sentiments mixed with the Quakers; and when these became most numerous, the troubles of our relations, the Lenoppi, began!—*Frauds, murders, and massacres,* (of which I shall have occasion to speak by and by) ensued.

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Look around you! View the country which your deceased massacred relations occupied in peace, so many ages before the arrival of the *whites*; extending more than one hundred days journey along the sea coast, from north to south!—cast your eyes now, if you can, from *this* council fire, to *that* sea coast, which is a moon's march from you!—Do you see a single nation of your own colour? Do you even see a single town within this immense extent, inhabited by red men? No; you see not one! Where then are they? What has become of them? Except a few Irroquois, and still a lesser number of their nephews, the Lenoppi, we know not the name of a single red man, nor the descendant of a red man, who resided on the lands watered by the rivers emptying into the great sea, towards the sun-rising!—

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Can you believe me? Can any of you believe what I am about to tell you? No; you cannot, unless you know how much I hate a liar! It is nevertheless true! Many of these white people, my friends, have an opinion, *called religion*, which they inculcate on the minds of their children, that they please God by exterminating us *red men*, whom they call *heathen*—I know not, my friends, what this name means; but I am sure the great and good spirit who made and governs us, cannot be the God these white men talk about so much, or they have very wrong notions of him! This sentiment of theirs has however cost many of our relations their lives! And, they who murder with this sentiment, will lye, to find an excuse for that murder!

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Let us pass over these old causes of complaint against our *proud, insolent, unjust*, elder brothers of the United States, and examine into the immediate causes of the present war between us and them; let us trace it however to its origin, and judge on which side the blame lies, *independent of their general evil conduct towards us!*

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Before I recapitulate to you the real causes and reasons for the present war, between us and the United States, suffer me to repeat to you the reasons urged on their parts; the injustice whereof will rouse your indignation; which I wish you to restrain however, not only until you hear me out, but until you shall hear the motives of our old wise men for peace.

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Our elderbrethren of the United States say, “that their papers, writings, belts, and messages to this, that, and the other nation, are sufficient proofs of their solicitude to preserve peace with the “Indian tribes!” but, my friends, look how these papers, writings, belts, and messages, have been thrown at you, with threats, by our elder brethren! In a ridiculous manner truly! They invade your country with their warriors! build forts in it without asking or obtaining your leave! assemble our neighbouring relations, who love rum and to live at their ease! and tell them a long story about their having conquered our fathers the English!——They tell them too, “that by virtue of conquering our fathers, they have “conquered us; and that all the lands of every nation of red men, “between the frozen regions on the north, the Ohio river on the “south, the Mississippi on the west, and Canada on the east, belong “to them!” You know this passed at Beaver-creek six years ago.

After this, our elder brethren sent out more gracious papers, writings, belts, and messages; ordering you to repair to their forts under the pretext of entering into a covenant of friendship with you; but in reality to treat you, as they did those whom they

frightened at fort M'Intosh, on Beaver-creek, to sign what they call *a deed*, and I know not what! You know, that the lives of those who signed that deed, would have paid the forfeit, had they not declared to you, that they were influenced to the act, in order to *save* their lives: and that our elder brethren told them, that every nation should be destroyed, who would not enter into the like agreement. This, my friends, is one mode, in which our elder brethren of the United States, have been pleased to evidence their solicitude to live in peace with you! What was the next? Listen, whilst I tell you!—

In consequence of their writings and messages, just now mentioned, although they were not presented with the dignity which the importance of the subject required, or conformably to the wise customs of our ancestors, but flung at you with threats; our relations the Shawanese, undertook to meet the commissioners of the United States, on the Ohio, at the mouth of the great Miami river, six years ago; and we know that our relations carried with them a sincere desire to renew their former friendship with our elder brethren, if it were to be done consistently with the safety of their women and children: for how were they to support these without a country to hunt in! Well—what passed at this meeting? Listen whilst I tell you!—

The commissioners of the United States came, as though to frighten our relations; and repeated to them the old stories that they had conquered our fathers the English, and that they had conquered all his children of every nation, and all our lands within the limits or bounds I have already mentioned; and they required the Shawanese nation to sign an acknowledgement thereof, and to give hostages! What answer did the Shawanese give to this? Listen whilst I repeat it to you! That man *there* before you, with the great plume on his head: look at him: he it was who spoke like a man in behalf of his whole nation, and on behalf of all nations here present. He said—

“Brothers of the United States, listen to me.”

“It is a long time since I heard your voice unaccompanied by threats—: Brothers! this is contrary to the wise customs of your and our wise ancestors, which you seem to be strangers to, or you would not talk as you do!”

“Brothers! You tell me that you have conquered our fathers the English! that you have conquered me! that you have conquered all the Indian nations; and that you have conquered their and my lands! I tell you brothers, what you say, is not true! you never conquered any of us.

“Brothers—you demand hostages from us! you do this no doubt to insult us, because you know that we are poor, defenceless, and ignorant; and because you are, as you say, strong and mighty, and that you have all our nations within your hand; by closing which, you can crush us all to death! and that all our nations are but as one child compared to an hundred warriors! and you tell me you have a million of warriors!

“Brothers—I am a warrior! I am appointed to speak to you,

“ on this wampum, in behalf of every warrior of my nation ; and
 “ I undertake to do it on behalf of every nation who are deter-
 “ mined not to live like dogs ; I therefore tell you brothers, I will
 “ give you no hostages ! neither shall you have our lands !
 “ Brothers—I suppose now, you will strive in earnest to conquer
 “ our lands ; and to conquer me ! I tell you brothers that unless
 “ you come to your senses, these rivers must run with blood, for
 “ we will never submit to be your dogs !
 “ Brothers ! I desire you to think well of the matter : I wish to live
 “ in peace with you, on proper terms ; but I will neither give nor
 “ sell you my lands ; nor shall you take them from me : God has
 “ planted me here for the support of my women and children, and
 “ I will defend them !”

A belt of Wampum.”

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

That man, now before you, having thus spoken to his elder brethren, presented his wampum to the commissioners of the United States, who would not receive it. He then laid it down on a map of our country, which they had spread before them ; when one of them, a Virginian, threw it off, *contemptuously*, with his cane ! This is another mode, my friends, in which the United States have been pleased to evidence their solicitude to live in peace with all nations !

But what answer did the commissioners of the United States give to the Shawanese ? and how did they act in consequence ? Listen whilst I tell you.

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

These commissioners of the United States, agreeable to their instructions from Congress, no doubt ; or to frighten our relations and us, did not withdraw from the council house, to consult what was best to be done ; but they told the Shawanese, that according to their promise not to hurt them in coming to, whilst at, or in returning from, that council fire, they would, on the morrow, supply them with ten days provisions of flour, to carry them beyond the immediate reach of the tomahawk of the United States : but, at the expiration of that time, they must look to themselves, as all other nations must who would not take hold of the friendship of the United States !

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

What I have just related was another mode in which the United States have proved their solicitude to live in peace with all nations !—You laugh my friends !—and I see that it is a laugh of scorn and indignation !—Suppress it, I beseech you, until you hear our wise men who wish you to make proposals for peace, before you receive any, presented to you as they ought to be !

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Whilst I tell you how the Shawanese behaved in consequence of

this insolent conduct of the commissioners! What did they do? did they humble themselves, and acknowledge that they would become the dogs of our elder brethren? No! Did they even consent to receive the offered bounty of ten days flour? No; they did not! but they stooped to pick up their tomahawks, and left the council fire that night; since which they have never returned to it. It is true indeed, that *Melunatha*, and some other *old men*, con-inned at the council fire, and that they signed the paper the commissioners of the United States presented to them—and for which they have justly suffered! but does this convey away our hunting country, after it was forbidden too, in the manner I have just related? No: We all say no it: it shall not!

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

The next, and indeed the last treaty to which some of our nations were invited, in the same awkward manner, without conforming to the customs established from old times, was held at Fort Harmar, about four years ago. Some few, of several nations, undertook to attend it, although their chiefs forbade them; knowing well that our elder brethren would require more of that *pen and ink witch-craft*, which they can make to speak things we never intended, or had any idea of, even an hundred years hence; just as they please. Among others, two Sacks, three or four Poutawatamies, as many Chippawas, and one Shawanese, *went to look at the treaty*, but without any authority whatsoever from their respective nations.—Here was no doubt fine work, although we knew little or nothing of the matter, except that it completed the evil deeds of our elder brethren; for since that time we have heard of nothing but threats to chastise us all! even those whom they cajoled to sign their papers, have not escaped!

But this is the mode our elder brethren are pleased to adopt, to evidence to us, they wish to live in peace with all nations!

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

About two years ago, the great war chief of the United States sent a boat load of his warriors *privately*, and contrary to the maxims established by our ancestors, to reconnoitre the country of our relations the Cherokees, on their river Tennessee: for he wanted, I suppose, to spy out a good place to build a fort upon, in their country, so as to enable him to seize fast hold of it.* A party of our relations met these warriors, and demanded from whence they came? Whither they were going? And what was their business? Receiving no satisfactory answer, our relations invited them to come on shore, which they refused to do: our relations then told them to go back; which they would not comply with: and therefore our relations fired upon and forced them to go down the stream. Of this we hear our elder brethren now complain; and

* Alluding, it is supposed, to major Doughty's expedition and defeat on the Tennessee river.

they pretend that this boat load of warriors were sent to the Chickasaws on business of peace : but when did we ever before hear of warriors alone being sent on peace ! We know that peace made in this way can never be lasting ! If one side have a right to use force to-day, the other party will have the same right to-morrow ; and necessity or compulsion can never bind either side longer than convenient—Who does not know this ? Wife men, on the contrary, will consult the interest and convenience of both parties : a peace made on this principle alone may be expected to be lasting. But our elder brethren of the United States do not love to make trial of this mode of evidencing to us their desire to live in peace with us ! Why did they not, in sending this boat load of warriors, up the Tennessee, consult with those who knew better how business of peace should be conducted ? and why did not these warriors shew their message ?——Was this transaction conducted as wife men, entrusted with the good of their nation, ought to have acted ? No : We all know it was not !——

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Some of the great men of our elder brethren say they have drunk of the waters of the Ohio, and therefore they know more about us red people, our customs, manners, and warfare, than the most wise chiefs of the united states, who have never drunk of the waters of that river, let them be ever so wise in other respects ! These very wife Ohio drinkers say, that we red people, who grew out of the soil we hunt upon, never had any right to it ; nor to any part of the country which God planted us in, more than the buffaloes which were given to us by God, to feed our women and children upon ! I wish, my friends, we had only such enemies as these to contend with ; we would glut our wolves on their carcases, with little trouble ! Such great men as these, are not fit even to war with our women, however they may love to set others at war ; and therefore are not worthy further notice of this council.

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

There are, on the other hand, many good people among our elder brethren, who are disposed to think that we, who grew out of this soil, are men as they are ; and that we ought to be treated as men : These are, however, imposed upon, by unwise chiefs ; by the cunning, the artful, and the wicked. Among other untruths, they are told, as an evidence our conduct is not influenced by their trespasses on our lands and hunting country, that our depredations have been principally upon the district of Kentucky ; and on the counties of Virginia, lying along the south side of the Ohio ; a country to which these unwise chiefs say we have no claim ! What think you of this ? Pray when, or where, did you give up your claim ? I believe there are many among our elder brethren who know better ! but I see them holding their heads down, with their hands on their lips : They will not speak in this, and other cases regarding us, through fear of giving offence to those who have sworn to chastise us : or through fear of it being said they are enemies to their new govern-

ment ! But I hope they will suffer me to speak ! I repeat then the question, When and where did you give or sell your hunting country on the south side of the Ohio ? You may perhaps be told, *at Fort Stanwix about twenty-three years ago !* What ignorance !—These unwise chiefs must have been children at that time, or been asleep ; or they must not have listened to their wise men, whose business it is to relate what has passed in the councils of their fathers ! Thus it is, my friends, that those among our elder brethren, who wish to live in peace with, and not cheat us, are imposed upon ! Where did you ever meet the United States in council, on any business whatever ! Have you ever yet entered into a covenant of friendship with them ? no ; you have not. How then have you given them your hunting country ?

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

When our relations, the Iroquois, were tempted, by the influence of sir William Johnson, to enter into the agreement made at Fort Stanwix, twenty-three years ago, it was stipulated that the king of England should not permit any of his people to settle upon any of the lands back of Virginia, between the great mountains and the Ohio river ; but that the same should remain to our use as our hunting country, as of old time, until he should make us a consideration, and until his necessities should compel him. Our father kept his word, and never authorized the Virginians to sit down on that our hunting country ! By what authority then is it, that the Virginians have presumed to do it ? If they tell you that they have conquered the right of our father, the king of England, I say then they have only conquered his right, and can claim no more than that treaty at Fort-Stanwix gave to him : and if they claim all the rights which that treaty gave to the king of England, let me ask you whether they are not equally bound by all the conditions of that treaty ? If they are so bound, let me ask them further, whether they have complied with those conditions ? You know they have not, and they know they have not ! And I am willing to meet them on this ground ! I ask then again, by what authority is it that the Virginians have possessed themselves of our hunting country, on the south side of the Ohio ! They know, and we know, they never obtained our permission ! but I will tell you their reasons for it ! Listen to me ! At their councils with our relations the Delawares, and others, they said, "*The United States were mighty and powerful ! That all the Indian nations, compared to them, were but as one child to an hundred warriors ! That they held all our nations in their hand, by closing of which they could crush us to death !*" These, my friends, are their reasons, and they have no other, except indeed it be the beauty and fertility of our country, which render it a desirable land to them !—You know, my friends, that our elder brethren have no other claim ! And you also know, that for this reason we have opposed that claim, from the moment they first placed their beds there, about fifteen years since ; and we have therefore, never suffered them to sleep in peace ! Yet the great chiefs of the United States appear to be ignorant of this ! What excuse have their chiefs for this ignorance ? or, if not ignorant, what excuse have they for thus imposing

on those of our elder brethren, who wish to do us justice, and not force our lands from us, *even by purchase*, whether we will part with them or not ! Let them examine all the writings and speeches which passed at Fort-Stanwix, as already mentioned, and inform themselves of the truth of what I say ! Our claim is not a new one ; for you have never suffered our elder brethren between the mountains bordering on Virginia, and the Ohio, to make their beds in peace, since their first encroachments on our hunting country there ; nor will you do it, until you obtain satisfaction.

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

We are told that our elder brethren of the United States say, they have, again and again, invited us to enter into a covenant of friendship with them, and that we have refused to listen to them : is this then a sufficient reason for their taking our hunting country from us ? Is it, I ask them, a sufficient reason ? for I declare them to be the aggressors, notwithstanding their pen and ink work !—When and where did we strike or injure them, before they seized on our hunting country ; not only without, but *contrary* to the agreement of our father, the king of England, as already stated ! And when did we relinquish our right to that country, in which it was the practice of several nations, here present, to hunt, from time immemorial ?

But admitting, as our elder brethren say, they have invited us to go to them, to enter into a covenant of friendship ; and that we have refused to listen to them, have we not other good reasons than those already mentioned for this refusal ? we certainly have ; for we see them attempt to make dogs of all the nations who have listened to them ! Advert only to their kindest language to the six nations, Delawares, &c.—“ *We the United States give peace !* ” Pray who sued to them, or even asked them, for peace ! Again, “ The United States “ are acknowledged to be *the sole and absolute sovereigns* of all the territory ceded to them by a treaty of peace made between them and “ the king of Great-Britain, the 14th day of January 1784 ”—the bounds of which they say, are, as I have already explained, the Frozen Regions on the north, the Spanish lands of Florida on the south, the Mississippi on the west, and Canada on the east. Here are bounds for you, my friends, for *these sole and absolute sovereigns* ! What then is to become of you, your women, and your children ?—away with such treaties—we will have none of them !—I say we will have none such !—The truly wise men of the United States do not wish us to enter into such ! And you must let them know, whenever you do enter into a covenant chain of friendship with them, that *you and the southern nations* are the sole and absolute sovereigns of all the lands within the limits described, which they have not acquired by *honest purchase*—and you must let our elder brethren know that you will prescribe the mode of sale, if ever you make any ; and that *your united councils*, within your own country, *distant from their forts*, shall be the place where all future agreements shall be made ; and that too in the presence of those who will not suffer *pen and ink work*, to cheat or deceive you.

Our elder brethren of the United States, complain and say, that “ this war against you is a remnant of their late general war, against

“our fathers *the English*; continued by separate banditti, who seem to have imbibed inveterate hatred against them for *fifteen years* past: that they took great pains to explain to you the cause of that war against our fathers, and to recommend to you to take no part in it, as it did not concern you: but you took up arms against them notwithstanding.” Here, my friends, is truth mixed with falsehood; and, by doing so, our elder brethren think to make all they say, to be believed as true!

You know, my friends, that it was your determination, here at this council fire, to mind only your hunting, when you first heard of your fathers’ warring with our elder brethren. Very different causes for their quarrel were ascribed by them; and as you understood neither perfectly, you resolved to mind your women and children only!

You know that very soon after this, the Virginians alarmed you, by making a number of beds in your hunting country, as already mentioned, south of the Ohio; as if to sleep there! You know that you spoke to them, over and over again, to go off: they told you, their father, the king of England, had sold the land to them: this was a lye! they refused to go off, and killed some of your chiefs who spoke to them. This you know disturbed you; yet you spoke to them as friends again; but they treated you still worse, and threatened you with their immense strength and numbers! This was the first correspondence you ever had with the Virginians, or with your elder brethren of the United States! At length some of your young men, being wounded, and having all their peltries stolen from them repeatedly, resolved to retaliate: this brought you into a war with Virginia—and you know you never had any war against the United States, until they took part with Virginia, against you; and sent their warriors to build forts in your country. You know this to be truth; for which you may even appeal to those whom the United States appointed to take care of good works, with several nations on the Ohio! If they are honest men, they will acknowledge what I say to be true; for they know it is.

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Your elder brethren complain and say, that you have, within a short time past, killed and taken prisoners, fifteen hundred men, women, and children, from Kentucky alone, beside as many more from other quarters, with two thousand of their horses, and goods to the value of fifty thousand dollars! My answer is,—If a despised *banditti* can do thus, what may you not do, united as you will now soon be? Will you not then convince your elder brethren, that it would have been wiser for them to have made the Virginians honest? But this is the way they first thought proper to evidence their solicitude to live in peace with you!

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

The United States say, that their solicitude to live in peace with the Indian nations is discoverable in all their transactions!—Let us examine some of them.

I have already mentioned their stealing our hunting country, south of the Ohio ! I have already mentioned their several attempts to make dogs of our relations, the Shawanese, Delawares, Wiandots, and six nations ! I have already mentioned their building forts in, and invading our country ! but let us examine some others ! I will mention a few only ; for the deceitful conduct of our elder brethren of the United States is too bad, to suffer me to dwell long upon it !

I acknowledge that our elder brethren did at first tell our relations, who lived in their neighbourhood, to sit still, and look on, whilst they wrestled with their fathers—this was really the council of wise and good men ; but they soon changed their counsellors ; or those counsellors forgot the advice they had given to the six nations, Delawares, &c.—for they not only marched their warriors into the country of our relations, and stained it with blood, without their consent, but contrary to their advice, although the six nations told them it was in direct violation of their covenant of friendship ! The United States, confiding in their numbers and strength, paid no regard to this, but set our relations at defiance—This was, no doubt, for an excuse to take hold of their lands, which some of their great men had cast their eyes on.

Then the United States made a tomahawk, and offered it to all nations, to strike our fathers the English ! This you know was not a wise measure ; for our fathers the English had behaved honestly to all nations : and we now see which of them, our fathers or our elder brethren, had designs on our lands ? Where have our fathers the English taken any lands from us, or from any Indian nation, without making fair purchase ? and then no more than they really stood in need of, without driving us out of our country at once ?

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

After all the fair speeches made by our elder brethren, not content with murdering our relations, who went to visit them as friends, they sent parties to kill their women and children, at their hunting camps ! not satisfied with this, they marched an army into the town of the praying Indians, as friends, and after living with them as such, several days, the Virginians massacred upwards of ninety men, women, and children, whilst assembled in their house of prayer. But, my friends, this is another of the modes, in which our elder brethren of the United States, have been pleased to evidence their solicitude to live in peace with all nations !

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Some of you have inclined to bury the tomahawk, and to let it sleep, because you saw the United States too powerful for you alone. You went into their fort at Vincennes, and told the officer you would sit down at his side, and mind your women and children only : That officer appeared to be a good man, and promised to treat you as friends : He did so ; and you were mutually satisfied with each other. What was the consequence ? You saw your elder brethren measuring all your lands ; yet you sat still : Seeing this, the Virginians sent captain Harding over with a large party of warriors to steal up-

on your women and children at your hunting camp, and he there killed a number of them. The Virginians followed those who ran off, and set at defiance the garrison at Vincennes, who were obliged to shut themselves up in the fort; for the Virginians threatened not only you, and all the French inhabitants there, but all who should afford you protection! This our elder brethren of the United States know to be true; yet their chiefs keep it to themselves! But this is the way they are pleased to shew their solicitude to live in peace with you! As soon as a council fire begins to be kindled, and to burn a little bright and clear, *they send the Virginians to kick it out!*

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

It is but four years since some of you wished to open a correspondence with your elder brethren, and performed several services for them, in conducting their people to and from St Vincennes, and in other affairs: when two of your chiefs went to Louisville, at the rapids of the Ohio, to receive their pay agreeable to contract, one of them was shot, and killed in the street of that town at noon-day, merely because he was a red man; the other escaped. The murderers were known and caressed by your elder brethren; who are pleased to take this method to evidence to you their solicitude to live in peace with you!

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Early in their war with your fathers the English, the great council of the United States appointed a chief to reside upon the Ohio, to cultivate peace and good works, between them and your relations the Shawanese, Delawares, and others: that chief made all our relations, in that quarter, believe that the United States had wise and good men to direct the affairs of his nation; and that it was the determined agreement and resolution of the States, to consult the interest and happiness of the Indian nations, who should sit still, and not interfere in the quarrel between your fathers, the English, and the United States: and he had sufficient influence with them, to obtain their promise, to send word, should any enemy march towards the United States, from any quarter, through their towns or near them. This they punctually executed, until the Shawanese saw a large party of warriors from Detroit going against fort Randolph, at the mouth of the great Kenhawa river, where the Virginians had shut themselves up to watch the Ohio. The Shawanese immediately dispatched a party, and several chiefs, well known to the Virginians at fort Randolph, to apprise them of the approach of their enemy: The garrison treated them kindly on their arrival, and for some days followed the advice of the Shawanese, to keep within the fort, because the garrison were not strong enough to go out and seek the enemy. At length they got tired; whereupon one of the officers resolved to go out of the gates of the fort, contrary to the entreaty of the Shawanese: This officer was scalped within sight of the fort; and the garrison, in revenge, murdered all their Shawanese friends, then in the fort, after skinning them, and particularly Colesqua, whilst yet alive, to make mockasins and razor-straps of their hides! What think

you now, my friends, of the earnest solicitude of the United States, to observe their agreements, and to live in peace with you ? I ask you, what think you of it ? You tell me these were Virginians ! I know it, and I can give fifty still greater instances of their perfidy ! but you know them already ! Yet these are the means which our elder brethren of the United States have been pleased to adopt, to evidence their solicitude to live in peace with all nations !

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

It is time now to turn your attention to that heavy black cloud you see rising in the east : You have sinned beyond forgiveness ; for you have refused to become the dogs of your elder brethren of the United States, or to acknowledge them to be "*the sole and absolute sovereigns of all your country* !" Therefore it is you see that cloud rising ! In it I read the threat of "*the town Destroyer*" to chastise you : This threat I see in the hands of the Corn Planter, who is employed to hold it up to you ! look at it, I beseech you, with composure ! This is the method in which our elder brethren are pleased to evidence their solicitude to live in friendship with you ! They throw this threatening belt at you, through the Corn Planter, and a white man ; who drop it on the road, because they do not know how to proceed ! but mark the cloud ! I confess it rises angrily enough ; and threatens your destruction ! Let us mark its progress, and prepare accordingly : Perhaps some of the wise men among our elder brethren may step forward to point out how these troubles may be terminated as they ought to be ! In the mean while, let us smoke our pipes, and take care of our women and children !

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

This is the proper time, whilst your tomahawks are lying on the ground, and whilst you are smoking your pipes with composure, to talk over the business before you ; whether to offer peace to your elder brethren of the United States ; or, whether to wait until they propose it to you ? This is the question now before you ; and it merits your serious attention ; not merely on account of that cloud you see rising in the east ; for unanimity in your councils will soon disperse that : but I speak in behalf of our women and children, to take care of whom it is our particular duty. The question is, how to do this to most advantage ? this is the matter now before you, for your serious consideration.

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

I am of opinion, (as I believe every warrior present is, for what I now say is at their request,) you ought not to give peace to your enemy until they ask it, or until they first retire out of your country : nor ought you to give them peace, nor listen to any proposals from them, whilst that cloud in the east shall be held over your country, should it advance into it ! But let us adhere to the maxims of our wise ancestors, never to meet around the council fire

with any nation, tomahawk in hand. So sure as you consent to meet the armies of your enemy, in your own country, to talk of peace, so surely will you repent of it ! Our wise ancestors have cautioned us against such foolish conduct ! our wise men have always told us, never to treat of peace with an enemy advancing and holding his tomahawk over our heads ! It is not a time then to talk, or to think of peace ! that is only a time to act like men and as warriors !

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Let me ask you : Have not your elder brethren of the United States many wise men among them, who know how the works of peace ought to be conducted ? I know they have. Why then do they not send such to you, at this council fire, with full powers to agree on a covenant of friendship which may be lasting ? one that may be convenient to *you*, as well as to *them* ? I ask why they have not done so ? Let me tell you ! They thought first to have made dogs of you : and then, to “*give you peace*,” on condition that you would allow them to be “*your sole and absolute sovereigns*” from north to south, and from the rising of the sun to its setting ! In this manner they have treated with your relations, the six nations, the Delawares, and others, at the German Flats, at Beaver creek, and at the confluence of the Miamia ! I ask you all relations present, chiefs and warriors, whether you would not willingly enter into a covenant of friendship, here at this council fire, with your elder brethren of the United States ; *now*, whilst their tomahawk, and ours, lie on the ground ? such a friendship, as free and independent nations ought to enter into, as being mutually advantageous ? and such an one as it would be your interest to preserve ? You answer yes. I knew you would. Why then, let me ask you again ; Why do not your elder brethren send some of their wise men to you ; and not keep throwing their messages and threats at your heads, in a manner you cannot understand, and ought not to listen to ! Do but look at the wampum brought by stealth into this council six moons ago by—— He persuaded you to send for the chiefs and warriors of your relations on the Wabache to come here to listen to his belt, which he brought hid under his breech-clout, from your elder brethren of the United States ! Well ! when you had collected your relations to listen to this belt, what did it contain ? what fair or honest condition of peace did it propose ?—Not one ! It was only meant to cajole you, and to blind your eyes, to prevent your entering into the league and covenant which you are now about to make with your surrounding relations, and to give the great Virginia warriors, an opportunity to steal to the Wabache to strike the women and children *there*, whilst their warriors were at *this* council fire ! But this, my friends, is one of the modes which your elder brethren of the United States are pleased to adopt, to evidence their solicitude to live in peace with all nations !

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

You have entered into a solemn league and covenant with seven

ral nations, not to bury the tomahawk, which you have taken up against your elder brethren of the United States, but at this council fire; uninfluenced by the threats of your enemy! Each nation has engaged with the other, not to make peace but at this council fire, with the consent of all nations now present: you have already agreed to send deputations from each tribe, to other nations, to present to them the scalps of your enemies, and to invite them to unite with you in the war! You have made a fair division of the spoil you have taken! Unanimity and harmony have governed all your councils! You have already agreed to make every necessary preparation against your common enemy! It is therefore my opinion, that you prosecute the arrangements you have already agreed to, and that you should listen to no proposals for peace, unless your elder brethren of the United States, shall send some of their wise men to this council fire; fully empowered to agree upon such terms of peace, as shall be *your* and *their* interests to observe inviolably. When they do this, but not until then, I will be among the foremost to advise you to melt down your tomahawk into stretching needles.

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

I have acquitted myself of the task you imposed upon me, and have spoken the sentiments of all the war chiefs, as they have directed me. Now let us listen to that ancient wise peace chief; *Ab, beth, din, Wyrosh, Yeshivo*, my cousin, whom you have appointed to speak in favour of your sending to your elder brethren, of the United States, to tell them you are ready to listen to peace, if they please to meet you on equal terms: you have long experienced his superior wisdom and love of peace! Be therefore attentive to him, I pray you!

Ab, beth, din, Wyrosh, Yeshivo then rose and said—*Chiefs, warriors, and friends of every nation, listen to me—*

It is in obedience to your appointment that I now rise, to recapitulate, and to enforce the few, but powerful arguments, which have been urged, why we, the confederated nations present, ought to seek peace with the United States. Although I acknowledge the truth of every circumstance mentioned by my cousin Gush, Gush agwa, and that those facts have justified your resentments; I hope you will excuse me, when I tell you, that all the injuries and injustice imposed upon you by the United States, were they, if possible, tenfold more iniquitous, will not add to your strength, nor lessen the numbers or the power of your oppressors: compared to them, your numbers are so few, that were you to lose one warrior for each hundred you might destroy of theirs, they would in time extirpate you from your country; and fill it by the influx which has already astonished you. This I can only impute to the influence which some evil spirit must have over the minds of *white men*, urging them to acts of fraud and tyranny, over men of other colour—For although we know, that the whites have not more strength or courage, and that they are less adroit in war than you are, their numbers for ever increase, as it

were, by witchcraft ; whilst yours diminish, when in their neighbourhood. Why then strive in vain against the influence of this evil spirit ?

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

You once flattered yourselves, that because your fathers the English called upon you for help, and you prevented the United States from taking their forts on the lakes, that your fathers would now assist you, to drive your elder brethren of the United States over the Ohio. You have applied to your fathers the English for this purpose, and they have refused you all assistance ! You have often repeated your application to them, and they have as often refused to aid your wishes ! why then will you longer persist in the unequal contest ?

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

Were your numbers ten times greater than they are, you would not be equal to the contest you have entered into : it is true, that whenever you attack double, or treble, the number of your enemy, you can beat them ; but what avails it to destroy an hundred of them, when you see ten hundred immediately arise like locusts from the earth ! And, let me tell you, that you may possibly beat your enemy until you teach him your own manner of warfare—What then will be the consequence ? Think of it, I beseech you !

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

It is our duty to take care of our women and children.—You, as warriors, know no fear for yourselves, but I pray you to have pity on them—turn your attention from war to hunting—so shall you comply with the first principles and wish of your old wise men.

Chiefs, warriors, and friends, listen—

You have experienced with how much difficulty you have brought about this confederacy :—you see how difficult it has been, to obtain the promises of the distant nations, to come next year to your assistance.—It is true, they have taken hold of the tomahawk ;—but may they not possibly disappoint you, when you shall stand most in need of their assistance ?

Chiefs, warriors, and friends—

I have spoken my mind freely ; and I tell you, if your elder brethren of the United States will retire from our lands, and make a fair agreement to be honest in future, and not attempt to cheat us as they have done, I advise you to make peace with them ;—such a one as it will be their and our interest to preserve.—But—If they will not do this, then I say, Be strong, and let us war on, like men, for ever. The question incumbent on you now to decide is, whether you shall first offer terms of peace to the United States, or whether you shall wait to receive such proposals from them. A third proposition, made by your relation, Dow-won-quat, may perhaps be most for your interest—That is, to apply to your father the king of England for his mediation ; making known to him the preliminaries, on